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CERTAINLY some most remarkable statistical & other evidences have been elicited by the inquiries which have been made, and from which we have quoted largely in our last two numbers; but before we ourselves enter minutely on the policy and details of any general sanatory enactment for the principal populous towns throughout the kingdom, we shall lay before our readers the *first* general

REPORT *of the Select Committee appointed to Inquire into the Circumstances affecting the Health of the Inhabitants of Large Towns and Populous Districts, &c.*

YOUR committee have inquired carefully into the matters submitted to them, and find that sanatory regulations in many of the principal towns of the realm are most imperfect and neglected, and that hence result great evils, suffering, and expense, to large bodies of the community. They have proposed several remedies; viz. general Acts to facilitate regulations in building, sewerage, and local improvements, applicable to populous districts; also the establishment of boards of health and local Inspectors, and have made other suggestions detailed in their report.

Before entering into the result of their inquiries, your committee venture to lay before the house a few preliminary observations respecting the important subject which has been intrusted to their consideration.

By reference to the population returns, it appears that, from the beginning of the present century, the whole population of Great Britain has increased at the rate of nearly sixteen per cent. every ten years; from 1801 to 1811, thence to 1821, and again to 1831; and there is every reason to believe about the same rate of increase will be found to have taken place next year, when the next decennial return will be made. Whilst, however, such has been the increase in the population of the kingdom at large, reference to the same returns shews, that the augmentation of numbers in the great towns of the realm has been much more rapid: thus, whilst the increase of population in England and Wales, in thirty years, from 1801 to 1831, has been something more than forty-seven per cent., the actual increase in the number of inhabitants of five of our most important provincial towns has very nearly doubled that rate; being

Manchester	109 per cent.
Glasgow	108 —
Birmingham.	73 —
Leeds	99 —
Liverpool	100 —

giving an average increase of almost ninety-eight per cent. in five cities, whose united population in 1831 amounted to 844,700, and at the present time may be calculated at not less than 1,126,000. Far the larger portion of this vast body of persons are engaged constantly in occupations connected with manufactures or commerce.

In many other of our large towns the increase in numbers has been of a like nature, and though not so rapid in several of them, yet, from a document lately laid before Parliament, and compiled by authority, it appears that on a comparison of a large rural district with various provincial and other towns (within or contiguous to it), the increase in population in the former, during ten years (1821 to 1831), was eleven per cent., and in the latter thirty-one per cent., shewing that the numbers in towns augmented almost three times as fast as in the country.

By reference to the Population Returns, we find that the proportion of the humbler classes occupied as manufacturers or workmen, and living in towns, is, as compared with the labourers in rural districts, completely changed.

It appears, by returns laid before the house, that the latter class was to the former, in 1790, about two to one; and now the town workmen and manufacturers, instead of being one-half, are nearly double the number of rural labourers.

It must be evident, that owing to this rapid increase in the population of great towns, the proportion of the humbler classes, of those with little leisure for education or improvement, will be augmented, as the more wealthy and educated gradually withdraw themselves from these close and crowded communities; which thus more and more stand in need of some superintending paternal care.

The difference in the proportion of numbers entirely occupied in labour is very different in different places. An account laid before your committee, and to which they believe due reliance may be given, states this proportion to vary from sixty-four per cent. in the borough of Manchester, to seventy-four in Salford, eighty-one in Ashton, and ninety-four in Duckinfield.

Your committee venture to remark, that the great towns of the realm may be divided into classes differing from each other in various circumstances, yet all requiring, more or less, the enforcement of sanatory regulations calculated for the benefit of their inhabitants. As,

1. The metropolis.
2. Manufacturing towns.
3. Populous seaport towns.
4. Great watering-places.
5. County and other considerable inland towns not being the seats of particular manufactures.

Besides these different classes of towns, there are various places, especially in the mining districts, in which a vast population of the working classes are spread irregularly over the face of the country, in some spots closely packed together, and in others dispersed in groups of dwellings more or less distinct from each other.

Your committee have only been able to inquire into the state of a portion of these towns; to have done more would have occupied them many months; but have thought they best fulfilled the trust committed to them, by confining their investigation to the condition of certain populous towns, or sometimes parts of towns, which might be considered samples of others similarly situated. They have especially directed their attention to localities in which the working and poorer classes chiefly reside, with a view, if evils are found to exist there within reach of legislative remedy, to make such suggestions of improvement as may appear practicable.

Before giving the result of their inquiries, and any abstract of the evidence adduced before them, they would say that considerable differences in the average state of the dwellings of the working classes, as might be expected, will be found to exist in different districts, arising sometimes from local causes, as the nature of the soil or situation, or the vicinity of a stream; and in others from the customs of the place, the nature of the occupations of the people, efficient or neglected municipal regulations.

Notwithstanding considerable allowance is to be made for these circumstances, your committee think it may be laid down as a general position, that persons of the same class, and engaged in the same sort of occupations in different populous towns, are subject, more or less, to the same evils (which are hereafter spoken to in evidence), that their health and comfort are affected by the same causes, and that the remedies suggested by your committee would be applicable to improve the condition of all or most of them.

Your committee, therefore, believe that the account given of the state of certain districts inhabited by the working classes in Manchester would be applicable to other great towns, in which the people are chiefly employed in the cotton manufacture; that the same might be said of Leeds, with respect to those busied in the woollen fabrics, and such a general resemblance will be found in towns similarly situated, that the same suggestions which would be applicable to one might, with some variation, be beneficially extended to all.

By the report lately laid before Parliament, it appears that the mortality and diseases of cities vary greatly, and of parts of the same city. Thus, the annual mortality of Whitechapel is shewn to be nearly four per cent., whilst that of Hackney, Camberwell, and St. George's, Hanover-square, is less than half that amount, and is found, from a "comparison of the several districts, that, *ceteris paribus*, the mortality increases as the density of the population increases, and where the density of the population is the same, that the rate of mortality depends upon the efficiency of the ventilation and of the means which are employed for the removal of impurities."

Your committee now proceed to give an abstract of the principal points in the evidence submitted to them. They have made inquiries into the state of the dwellings of the poorer classes in various parts of the metropolis, in Dublin, Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, Bradford, Hull, Birmingham, Coventry, and several other large towns, and though there is a great difference in many of the cases examined, they would state, as a general result, that evils of a most extensive and afflicting nature are found to prevail, affecting the health and comfort of vast bodies of their fellow-subjects, and which might be removed or much lessened by due sanatory regulations.

Evidence has been laid before them, depicting the miserably-neglected condition of the abodes of multitudes of the working classes in Bethnal Green, Whitechapel, portions of Wapping, Ratcliffe Highway, the parish of Stepney, and other districts, in the east of London; an account of which has already been laid before Parliament in a "Report to the Poor Law Commissioners on the prevalence of certain physical causes of fever in the metropolis, which might be removed by certain sanatory regulations;" and which is printed in the Fourth Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners.

The same remarks apply, though with somewhat diminished force, to various other districts of London inhabited by the poorer classes, especially parts of the Holborn Union, of St. Olave's, and St. George's Union, Southwark, and to portions of Lambeth, Bermondsey, Walworth, Peckham, Vauxhall, and several other places.

The prevalence of fever and other disorders in these districts is attributed, in great measure, to the neglected state of the different localities, and is detailed in Dr. Arnott's evidence, p. 33, applicable more especially to the crowded eastern parts of London, viz.:

1. Houses and courts and alleys without privies, without covered drains, and with only open surface gutters, or ill-made that the fluid in many places was stagnant.

2. Large open ditches containing stagnant liquid filth.

3. Houses dirty beyond description, as if never washed or swept, and extremely crowded with inhabitants. "Heaps of refuse and rubbish, vegetable and animal remains, at the bottoms of close courts, and in corners."

In answer to the question, "Do you feel any doubt that the cases of fever and ill-health you noticed arose from some of those causes?" the answer of Dr. Arnott is, "I have not the slightest doubt of it." Reference was then made by the committee to the Report to the Poor Law Commissioners before alluded to, and the question is asked, "You state remedially at the top of page 142" "We have no doubt that by proper sanatory police regulations, such as a board of health might decide upon, the typhoid fevers of London and other places might be made to disappear; and we think the remedial measures would cost less than it now costs to parishes and public charities to take care of the sick, and to provide for the helpless orphans and widows of those who die." "Is that your confirmed opinion?" *Answer:* "Yes, it is." This is stated to be applicable not merely to the crowded district east of London, but to any crowded districts of large towns in the realm.

Evidence of undoubted credit, and of the

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